

MICHIGAN'S DRIVER RESPONSIBILITY LAW



Responsible Driving

In an effort to promote greater traffic safety, Michigan has a new Driver Responsibility Program to deter potentially dangerous driving behavior, thereby saving lives.

Effective October 1, 2003, the Driver Responsibility Program calls for a monetary fee for drivers who:

- **Are convicted of specific qualifying offenses, or**
- **Accumulate seven or more qualifying points on their driving records.**

ABOUT THE LAW...

Under Michigan law, drivers may face a separate fee after they are convicted or found responsible for certain traffic offenses. This fee is in addition to any other fine or penalty imposed by the court.

The court furnishes information about the traffic offense to the Michigan Department of State.

The Michigan Department of State, in turn, posts the offense to the driving record and forwards the fee information to the Michigan Department of Treasury for collection.

Fee notices are then mailed to drivers from the Michigan Department of Treasury.

Under the Driver Responsibility Law, there are two different types of fees:

Annual Fees for Specific Offenses

Fees are imposed for specific traffic offenses as defined by law.

Drivers convicted of one of these qualifying offenses will be imposed a Driver Responsibility fee of \$150, \$200, \$500 or \$1,000 for **two consecutive years**.

Operating While Intoxicated - \$1,000

Felonious Driving - \$1,000

Reckless Driving - \$500

Driving While License Suspended - \$500

No Proof of Insurance - \$200

Drove With Expired Driver's License - \$150

Drove Without Proper Endorsement - \$150

Multiple Driver Responsibility fees are imposed if a driver has more than one qualifying offense.

The amount of the fee is determined by the seriousness of the traffic offense. The table in the column to the left provides some examples of the fee imposed for certain common offenses. A complete list of qualifying offenses can be found at <http://www.michigan.gov/sos>.

The first fee is imposed shortly after the court reports the traffic offense to the Michigan Department of State. The fee is repeated one year later.

Annual Fee for 7 or More Points

There is a second type of Driver Responsibility fee. It applies to drivers who accumulate 7 or more points on their driving record. However, only points from *general* moving violations count – not the points for offenses with a specific fee as described earlier. This fee is calculated once per year and will be imposed every year until the driver has less than 7 points.

Points will remain on the driving record for two years from the date a driver is found guilty or deemed responsible for an offense.

Most moving violations have points. Some of the more common moving violations that can lead to a points-based fee are:

- Speeding (2 to 5 points)
- Careless Driving (3 points)
- Fail to Yield (2 points)
- Improper Turn (2 points)
- Disobeying a Traffic Signal (3 points)
- Disobeying a Stop Sign (3 points)
- Fail to Stop for a School Bus (3 points)
- Improper Passing (3 points)
- Following Too Close (2 points)

The fees begin at \$100 for 7 points and increase by \$50 for each additional point on the record.

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| 7 Points = \$100 | 8 Points = \$150 | 9 Points = \$200 |
| 10 Points = \$250 | 11 Points = \$300 | 12 Points = \$350 |
| 13 Points = \$400 | 14 Points = \$450 | 15 Points = \$500 |
| 16 Points = \$550 | 17 Points = \$600 | 18 Points = \$650 |

Safe Driving: A Shared Responsibility

High-risk drivers are more likely to be involved in crashes and to receive additional convictions. Also, drivers incurring 12 or more points on their driving records are subject to a driver reexamination by the Michigan Department of State with a possible loss of driving privileges. Don't put yourself or others at risk. Drive more safely by employing the tips listed below:

Don't drive distracted. Taking your eyes off the road or hands off the steering wheel presents obvious driving risks. Mental activities that take your mind away from driving are just as dangerous. Give driving your full attention.

Don't be an aggressive driver. Crowded roads leave little room for error. This can lead to hostility among drivers. Give other drivers the benefit of the doubt. Slow down and follow the traffic laws and the rules of the road.

Consider taking a driver refresher course. Classes are offered through local safety organizations.

Remember, safe driving is the responsibility of all drivers.

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I pay my Driver Responsibility fee?

The Michigan Department of Treasury collects Driver Responsibility fees. Customers may pay their fees:

By mail: Mail a check, cashier's check or money order payable to "State of Michigan - SAC" for the amount due to:

Collection Division
Michigan Department of Treasury
P.O. Box 30199
Lansing, MI 48909-7699

To ensure proper credit to your account, use the coupon included with your Driver Responsibility fee notice. This coupon will include an assessment number. Please include this number on your check.

By phone: Electronic Funds Transfer payments can be arranged. Contact Treasury at (517) 241-4900.

Please note that Driver Responsibility fee payments cannot be accepted by the courts or at Secretary of State branch offices.

What happens if the Driver Responsibility fee is not paid?

Drivers will be sent a notice to pay the Driver Responsibility fee. If the driver fails to pay, or to enter into an installment agreement by the deadline in the notice, driving privileges will be suspended until full payment is made. Once a suspension is in effect, the driver will also be required to pay a \$125 reinstatement fee to the Michigan Department of State before the suspension is lifted.

Finally, the Michigan Department of Treasury can take further collection action, including wage levies, income tax offsets, and levies against bank accounts or other assets.

Where can I call to ask a question about my Driver Responsibility fee?

Questions regarding fee balances should be referred to the Michigan Department of Treasury at (517) 241-4900.

For questions regarding the driving record, or receiving an Order of Action to suspend a driver's license, call the Michigan Department of State at (517) 322-1460.

I received a notice for "No Proof of Insurance," but I heard that the Legislature changed this fee. Do I still owe the fee?

Under Public Act 52 of 2004, effective May 1, 2004, "No Proof of Insurance" offenses will not be sent to the Michigan Department of State if the driver can provide proof of insurance prior to the court appearance date on the ticket. *Drivers who do not show their proof of insurance will still be charged a fee of \$200 for two years.* It is the driver's responsibility to present proof of insurance to the court before the appearance date.

Can I make arrangements to pay my Driver Responsibility fee over time?

If the total amount owed in Driver Responsibility fees is \$500 or more, a person can enter into an installment agreement with the Michigan Department of Treasury. Installment agreements allow periodic payments for up to 12 months from the date of the first fee notice. Contact the Michigan Department of Treasury at (517) 241-4900 to inquire about an installment agreement. Please note that defaulting on an agreement will lead to a driver's license suspension and other collection actions.

You can find further information on the Driver Responsibility Program at:
<http://www.michigan.gov/sos/>